REMARKS:

Claims 10-17 are pending in the application, with claims 1-9 and 18-25 cancelled as a result of the Restriction Request of April 8, 2009, and to focus prosecution specifically on repair methods.

Claims 10-13, 16-18, 21 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minayoshi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,890,461, "Minayoshi") in view of Thom (German Patent No. 19625259), while claims 14 and 15 where rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minayoshi and Thom in view of Hillyer (U.S. Patent No. 3,477,979) and claims 23-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over or the combination of Minayoshi and Thom in view of Trimble (U.S. Patent No. 4,923,203). Only the rejection of claims 10-17 are addressed below.

The sole pending independent claim (claim 10) recites a method for repairing, *in situ*, a hollow support structure that has a deteriorated portion by placing a high tensile strength sleeve with a closed lower end inside the structure such that the sleeve extends over the depth of the deteriorated portion and adding an aggregate material such that the aggregate fills the sleeve at least over the depth of the deteriorated portion. Support for reciting a "closed lower end" of the high tensile strength sleeve is found in paragraph [0030] and Figure 5c of the published U.S. application.

The Examiner combines the aggregate reinforcing method of Minayoshi with the sleeve of Thom's repair method to arrive at claim 10. However, the Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Minayoshi and Thom does not teach or suggest a repair method in the way the claimed new invention does. Specifically, at least the steps of" placing a high tensile strength sleeve with a closed lower end in the hollow support structure to a depth such that the high tensile strength sleeve extends over the depth of the deteriorated portion" and substantially filling "the high strength sleeve with a closed lower end" with an aggregate material at least over the depth of the deteriorated portion of the pole are not disclosed or suggested by the combination of Minayoshi and Thom.

All of Thom's sleeve embodiments are illustrated to be open "stent-like" sleeves for the express purpose of not filling the interior of the stent (and therefore the pole) with an aggregate material, i.e., for the purpose of "protect[ing] the accessibility to the mast-inner" and "mechanisms inside the mast pipe against damages" as described in paragraph [7] of the machine translation of Thom. Thus, even if one of ordinary skill were to combine the stent of Thom with Minayoshi's reinforcement method of filling some parts of a pole with either mortar or a reinforcement member in combination with an aggregate, there still would be no disclosure or suggestion of placing and filling a high strength sleeve with a closed lower end such that the closed sleeve specifically extends over the depth of the deteriorated portion of a pole.

Advantageously, the closed end of the applicant's method avoids the need for providing a "base" of sand or other material upon which the reinforcement and aggregate would be placed as described in Minayoshi, i.e., repairs are precisely made without the need to fill all of the pole below a repair site. Hence, the applicant provides an improved method specifically directed to repairing areas of pole damage in situ.

Except for the fee due for a 3-month time extension petition fee, no additional fee is believed to be due. Should there be any unforeseen fee or credit, please charge or apply it to deposit account 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,

/Gavin J. Milczarek-Desai/

Gavin J. Milczarek-Desai
Reg. No. 45,801

(520) 770-8716 phone
(520) 770-2235 fax